

HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT.

All communications or inquiry for this department should be addressed to
FLORIDA AGRICULTURIST,

The editor of this department will gladly welcome any hints or articles pertinent to the household. If an reader has any helpful suggestions, please send them along.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK.

Little courtesies are the wayside flowers of life.

The best biographies are those on two feet.

Instead of real love being such a lady-like thing, it often has blisters on its feet, corns on its hands, and a back that aches with loads of others.

Go as low as we please, there is always an evil below which we have transcended. Go as high as we please, there is a good to be attained.

Each of us has vices beneath us, virtues above us. Our ideals are our virtues. Our temptations are our vices. The ideal beckons us onward. The temptation lures us backward.—Exchange.

For Your Future Use.

One of the most unique descriptions for a typical George Washington dinner, is offered in an exchange, which we reprint for our readers' future use. We are told to have the table lighted with wax candles, and to serve the dinner on old blue and white china. The ice cream to be moulded in the form of the small Bunker Hill monuments, and tiny flags to ornament each dish. Cherries are not to be conspicuous, but the election cake will have an elaborate decoration of candied cherries, with leaves of angelica.

An amusing dish for the patriotic table is made by having French chops carefully trimmed. Broil them nicely, and have ready some rounds of toast or fried bread. Fasten each chop between two of these rounds with wooden toothpicks or small skewers, and the result is a very close imitation of a cannon. Put a few stoned olives on each plate to represent ammunition.

A pretty salad in keeping with the general scheme is made of the choicest canned or preserved cherries to be had. Unless the stones have already been removed, take them out carefully, and substitute a blanched filbert or hazelnut. Arrange on white lettuce leaves, and serve with a French dressing in which lemon juice takes the place of vinegar.

Then we might add any other suggestive dishes that come to us.

Appropriate Gifts.

We are often asked to suggest suitable gifts for babies, and old ladies, and have just found a list for both that are especially practical.

For the baby, necklaces are many to choose from. They come in Spanish coral, in gold beads, in small turquoise beads, and in both opaque as well as transparent amber. Rattles have become luxurious affairs, in gold, silver, ivory or pearl. In size they vary, as they do in shape. Bib and sleeve, or so-called cuff pins, are legion. Very pretty are they in engraved gold, in conch-shell, in brilliant enamels, or with small jewel, precious or semi-precious, or with small pearls. To attach a birth-stone charm to a baby's necklace is one of the fads of the day. The stones may be mounted in gold. Baby's silver sets devolve upon rich relatives to purchase and present. Just now many are the pieces, both in gold and silver, as well as silver-plated. There is a drinking cup, a bowl, a plate, saucer, a tray, spoons of two sizes, forks, knives, food pushers and napkin rings. Lesser gifts are in sets of three pins connected with the gold chains, as well as separate ones, in gold and enamel. Small studs, also in gold, in enamel or jewel studded, are pretty ornamental decorations used in the closing of the little yokes to baby's white lingerie robes.

Hand-made dresses, caps made from dainty handkerchiefs, toilet sets for basket.

For the elderly lady or grandmother, nothing is so pleasing as soft silk

gown, gun metal coin purse, a suitable hair ornament, nosegay in a colonial vase, a box of her favorite sweets, pair of crochet room slippers, set of sweet lavender sachets, a dainty little sholder shawl, becoming liberty silk neck piece, pretty shade for her room lamp, suede wrist bag, hot water bottle in a soft, pretty case, bottle or so of her favorite toilet water, Grecian ribbon support if she be stout, a print, "The Last of the Skein," handsome bag for her fancy work supplies, gold decorated crystal glass and water bottle, dainty muslin or lace turnover set for neck and wrists, combined utility box and window seat, heavy inside curtains to pull together when searching winds whistle, a dainty writing board.

From Parlor to Kitchen.

Silver that is not in constant use will keep bright if wrapped in fine white tissue paper.

A cloth saturated with coal oil will clean a sink, bathtub or basin which has become greasy and discolored from use.

If a spoonful of borax is put into the last water in which white clothes are rinsed, it will whiten them very much. The borax should be dissolved in a little hot water before it is added to the rinsing water.

Residents of country towns and villages whose fire-fighting facilities are limited may, with but little trouble, make an extinguisher that will put out any chance blaze if used at once. All the housewife needs to do is to put three pounds of salt into a gallon of water, and to this add one and one-half pounds of sal ammoniac. This liquid should be bottled, and in case of fire the contents of the bottle should be poured upon it.

If a tablespoonful of vinegar is put into the lard in which doughnuts are fried it will prevent them from absorbing too much fat. One or two teaspoonfuls put into a kettle containing boiling beef or chicken will hasten it in becoming tender. A little vinegar put into stove blacking will make it stick better and prevent dust from flying while polishing.

A small quantity of ice cream for an invalid can be easily made without a regular freezer. Put the cream in a cup and place this in a good-sized bowl. Fill the latter with equal quantities of salt and ice broken very fine. Then turn the cup briskly around with one hand and stir the contents of the cup with the other. The whole process takes only a few moments.

For applying a tonic to the scalp, nothing is better and cheaper than a new machine oil can. It puts the application where it is needed without soiling the hair, and it only costs five cents. Such a utensil is also the most convenient article for applying kerosene (or any vermin poison) to a bedstead, as it forces the liquid into the cracks so thoroughly.

The most beautiful bit of greenery I know hangs overhead a group of children in a city kindergarten. It is a huge fern ball with a splendid yard-long sweep of verdant Boston ferns. It was an invention of the artistic kindergarten's. She told me how she made it. Into a fifteen-cent ox muzzle was put a lining of fine moss, then some Boston fern roots here and there, with small fronds sprouting from between the inner netting. Inside was packed plenty of rich soil and it was kept generously moist. Presently the ferns grew, wide and glossy, sweeping their long trails north, south, east and west.

We were giving a little dinner with the color scheme in red and wanted inexpensive menu cards. We purchased wall paper with huge red roses upon it, cut them out and tied to the roses, with red cord, paper cut the same size and shape of the rose to make a "booklet." Inside we printed the menu. There were four different rose designs in the wall paper. Every guest voted our "hand painted menus" a success, and the cost was less than twenty cents for thirty.—Good House Keeping.

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Birthdays in Japan.

The Japanese have a queer way of celebrating birthdays. Instead of a party in June for little Tama, and a party in September for little O'Tatsu, and a party in December for little Ume, there's a party in February in honor of all the little girls, and one in May for all the little boys. In February every little girl receives from all her grown-up relatives and friends gifts of dolls, and besides these dolls her mother takes out of the closet many of the dolls she had when she was a child, and some even older dolls that the little girl's grandmother had when she was a little tot; and I dare say there are dolls that belonged to the little girl's great-grandmother, and even her great-great-grandmother, quaint dolls in faded clothes of a hundred years and more ago, carefully handed down from mother to daughter ever since. I saw one old doll, about six inches tall, dressed as a daimio, a great lord of by-gone times, in gorgeous brocade robes, covered with steel armor of little overlapping plates, just as beautifully made as if for a real warrior. He wore a tiny helmet, and carried two tiny swords not as long as matches. You could draw the swords out of their scabbards just like real ones, and they were as sharp as they could be. Well, for about a week all Japan is one great dolls' tea party; and then the festival is over, and all the best dolls, even the presents to the little girls, are put carefully away, never to be even looked at for a whole year. I don't see how the Japanese girls can bear that part of it.

Then at the first of May comes the boys' festival—the Fish Festival, it is called. Every family that's lucky enough to have a boy puts up a flag-pole in the dooryard; or perhaps several families combine to use the same pole, and have it a bigger, handsomer one than one family could afford. On the top of the pole is a gilt ball, or else a basket with something bright and tinsely in it. And flying from the pole, in the brisk, spring winds, is a whole string of carp, made of oiled paper or cloth, painted in bright colors, and anywhere from five to fifteen feet long. Each fish belongs to some particular boy, and the carp is chosen because it is a big, strong fish, and not only can swim against the most rapid currents, but in its eagerness to get up stream will leap straight up

waterfalls. The gold ball means a treasure, which the carp, leaping and struggling, buffeted by the wind, is forever trying to reach. And the whole thing means that the boy, when he's a man, will have to battle his way as the sturdy carp struggles up the river. The fishes look so very pretty and gay, flying over his house, and the boy gets so many treats at Fish Festival time, that I don't think he minds even if the carp is a nice little jolly lecture on ambition.—St. Nicholas.

Recipes.

Peanut-Butter—The most toothsome peanut-butter we have tasted was home-made, and this is the way our hostess prepared it: After freeing the peanut from shells and skins, she put them through her food-chopper, into which she had inserted the finest knife in the set. The ground kernels were salted to taste, and about half a tablespoonful of butter well worked in. She used one quart of peanuts (measured with the shells on), which made sufficient peanut butter to fill a large jelly-tumbler. Placed on ice, it will keep a long time.

Dates in Breakfast Food—Many of the dry breakfast foods to be eaten with milk or cream may be made more palatable by the addition of dates from which the stones have been removed. They add a zest and flavor which children find especially agreeable. Dates are an excellent food in themselves and are much valued in the East. When chopped and added to ice cream they give a pleasant variety. They may be used in ordinary custard in the same way. Many people avoid the use of dates of the tough skin. If boiling water is turned over them, these skins may be removed without difficulty. I always remove the skins from dates when using them in breakfast food and for most other purposes. Whole dates with the skins removed are much better for children than candy.—Exchange.

There are two groves at Estero which were planted four and five years ago. This year the four year old grove produced 3,000 boxes and the five year old 7,000 boxes, making a total of 10,000 boxes. The Fort Myers Press states that this is more fruit than was shipped from the entire County of Lee ten years ago.